

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LUSAKA 1662

USUN PASS TO SENATOR CLARK

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR PINT PINS RH ZA SF

SUBJECT: VICTORIA BRIDGE TALKS: A ZAMBIAN DESCRIPTION

REF: PRETORIA 3262

1. SUMMARY. IN DETAILED, HOUR-LONG CONVERSATION, PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER MARK CHONA KINDLY CLARIFIED PROCEEDINGS AND OUTCOME OF VICTORIA VALLS MEETINGS WHICH GAVE SORRY PICTURE OF "UNPREPARED, INCAPABLE AND WEAKLY-LED ANC", BOLSTERED BY OUTSIDE HELP WHICH RESULTED IN MORE PROGRESS TOWARD NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT THAN ANC DESERVED. CHONA DESCRIBED ANC AS IN REAL LEADERSHIP CRISIS WHICH ZAMBIANS AND NEIGHBORING AFRICAN SUPPORTERS HOPE CAN BE CONTAINED UNTIL SETTLEMENT REACHED. FOR MOMENT ZAMBIANS ARE "LETTING
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THE DUST SETTLE" FOLLOWING THE BRIDGE MEETINGS, AND

STUDYING THE SITUATION WHILE MAINTAINING CONTACTS WITH SOUTH AFRICANS WHOM THEY HAVE ASKED TO DELIVER SEVEN-POINT MESSAGE TO SMITH. ZAMBIANS HAVE ALSO ASKED BRITISH TO LEND HAND ON ACTUAL MECHANICS OF NEGOTIATION. END SUMMARY.

2. PREPARATIONS FOR AND PROBLEMS AT BRIDGE MEETING..
CHONA INSISTS ONLY PM VORSTER AND IAN SMITH WERE SIGNATORIES TO PRETORIA AGREEMENT, A "PROPOSAL" WHICH CHONA ONLY SIGNED AS WITNESS AND DELIVERED TO ANC FOR THEIR CONSIDERATION. SAID LONDON GUARDIAN OF AUG 28 HAD VERY CRITICAL ARTICLE ON CHONA'S ROLE. KEN FOWLER OF RHODESIAN SECURITY SERVICE BROUGHT TO ZAMBIANS AUG 9 SMITH'S 6-POINT DECLARATION OF INTENT TO NEGOTIATE, WHICH CHONA PROMPTLY PASSED TO ANC TO MATCH UP WITH ITS 2-POINT DECLARATION OF INTENT. FOLLOWING PRESIDENT KAUNDA MEETING AND PEP TALK TO ANC, SITHOLE CALLED CHONA ON AUG 10 ACCEPTING SMITH'S DECLARATION ON BEHALF OF ANC. CHONA THEN FLEW TO LOURENCO MARQUES AND DAR TO BRIEF PRESIDENTS MACHEL AND NYERERE. ON AUG 11 KAUNDA AGAIN TALKED WITH ANC WHICH WAS IN HIGH SPIRITS AND TOOK ONLY THREE MINUTES TO RECONFIRM THEIR AGREEMENT, INCLUDING CHIKEREMA. HOWEVER, ON MORNING AUG 12 ANC LEADERSHIP CONSULTED WITH ZIMBABWE LIBERATION COUNCIL, ITS EXTERNAL WING, AND BY CHANCE ZAMBIANS LEARNED THERE SMALL PROBLEM INVOLVING ISSUE OF FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT. ZAMBIANS THEREUPON CONTACTED RHODESIANS AND OBTAINED SMITH'S SOLEMN UNDERTAKING THAT RHODESIAN NATIONALISTS COULD LEAVE COUNTRY WITHOUT PROBLEMS OF RE-ENTRY. (ANC OVERLOOKED FACT THIS ASSURANCE WORTHLESS AS REGARDS EXILES LIKE SITHOLE AND CHIKEREMA, UNTIL NKOMO OBJECTED LATER AT LIVINGSTONE.) ANC'S FORMAL ACCEPTANCE PUBLISHED IN TIMES OF ZAMBIA AUG 14 (LUSAKA 1522). HOWEVER, WHEN ANC REACHED LIVINGSTONE AUG 16, BIG DEBATE ENSUED OVER ISSUE OF "MAJORITY RULE NOW". THIS SET ANC MEMBERS AGAINST ONE ANOTHER AND PROBABLY PUT BISHOP MUZOREWA OFF BALANCE.

3. ANC'S POOR SHOW WITH SMITH..CHONA CONFIRMED STORIES CIRCULATING AROUND LUSAKA THAT BISHOP MUZOREWA GOT OFF ON WRONG FOOT IN TALKS BY NOT HAVING AT HAND EVEN ONE COPY OF SMITH'S DECLARATION OF INTENT OR PRETORIA AGREEMENT. CONFIDENTIAL

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THIS GAVE SMITH DISTINCT PSYCHOLOGICAL ADVANTAGE AS HE HAUGHTILY HANDED THE BISHOP COPIES OF BASIS FOR DISCUSSION. MOST EGREGIOUS PSYCHOLOGICAL ERROR IN CHONA'S VIEW WAS COMMITTED BY MUZOREWA IN IMMEDIATELY AGREEING TO ALL OF SMITH'S 6-POINTS WITH EXCEPTION OF THIRD, CONCERNING MEETING WITHIN SEVEN DAYS IN SALISBURY FOR DETAILED DISCUSSION OF CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE. ANC FELL INTO WRANGLING AND SHOUTING AMONG THEMSELVES--WHICH MUZOREWA

UNABLE TO CONTROL--INSISTING ON INCLUSION OF PHRASE
"MAJORITY RULE NOW". ANC ALSO QUARRELED BECAUSE
BISHOP APPEARED TO HAVE CONCEDED MORE WITH QUICK ACCEPTANCE
OF ALL OF SMITH'S 6 POINTS THAN THEY GAINED FROM SMITH'S
ACCEPTANCE OF ONLY ONE OF ANC'S TWO POINTS. THUS WITH
SMITH ON OFFENSIVE, ANC SOUGHT ADJOURNMENT OF PROCEEDINGS.
MUZOREWA HAD PERFORMED SO BADLY, CHONA SAID, THAT FRELIMO,
TANZANIAN AND BOTSWANAN OBSERVERS VISIBLY EMBARRASSED,
WHILE ZAMBIANS WERE DOWNRIGHT ANNOYED AND PRESIDENT KAUNDA
TOOK TO COUNSELING THEM YET AGAIN ON NEGOTIATING TACTICS.
THE ADJOURNMENT SAVED THE MEETING FROM BEING A 30-MINUTE
AFFAIR, AS SMITH PREDICTED.

4. WHEN PLENARY DISCUSSION ON "MAJORITY RULE NOW"
RESUMED, CHONA THOUGHT ANC MISSED TWO OPPORTUNITIES WHICH
SMITH LAID AT THEIR FEET FOR OFFERING A DRAFT FORMULATION.
WHEN I ASKED CHONA WHAT THE ANC'S BATTERY OF SEVEN LAWYERS
WAS DOING, HE EXPLAINED THAT THE THREE EXPATRIATE MEMBERS
OF THE TEAM (MAISELS, BROWN AND WRIGHT), WHILE CAPABLE,
WERE SIMPLY NOT TRUSTED BY ANC, NOR GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY
UNTIL LATER IN EVENING WHEN THEY WERE FINALLY PRESSED INTO
SERVICE AND DEVELOPED A SOUND LEGAL FORMULATION TO OVERCOME
THE "MAJORITY RULE NOW" ISSUE.

5. PARA THREE OF THE FINAL VERSION OF THE VICTORIA FALLS
DECLARATION OF INTENT WHICH SPEAKS OF WORKING OUT "IMMEDIATELY
A CONSTITUTIONAL SETTLEMENT...ACCEPTABLE TO ALL THE PEOPLE
OF OUR COUNTRY" WAS THE COMPROMISE LANGUAGE PROPOSED BY ANC

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2071

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AND ACCEPTED BY SMITH. CHONA SAID THE WORD "ALL"
SHOULD BE UNDERSCORED AS IT EMBRACES CONCEPT OF
MAJORITY RULE. LATER SMITH TRIED TO REVERSE HIMSELF
BUT VORSTER HELD HIM TO HIS BARGAIN. IN REFUSING TO
CONSIDER PHRASE "MAJORITY RULE NOW," SMITH TOLD CHONA
THAT RHODESIA WOULD HAVE ANOTHER PRIME MINISTER TOMORROW
IF HE SIGNED. THAT, SMITH CONTESTED, COULD BE WORSE.

6. FRELIMO REPRESENTATIVE CONVINCINGLY ARGUED THAT
PHRASE "MAJORITY RULE NOW" TOGETHER WITH PROPOSAL FOR
TRYING TO COMPLETE A SETTLEMENT BY OCT 31 WAS A
CONTRADICTION IN TERMS WHICH ANC BLISSFULLY UNCONSCIOUS
OF.

7. IN DRAFTING POINT 4 OF VICTORIA FALLS DECLARATION,
ANC ADVANCED IDEA OF PLENARY MEETING IN SALISBURY,
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CONTENDING FALL SESSION NEEDED FOR ISSUING DIRECTIVES.
CHONA INTERPRETED THIS ACCEPTANCE OF RHODESIAN VENUE AS
AN ANC CONCESSION AND URGED MUZOREWA TO ASK FOR MATCHING
CONCESSION FROM SMITH. CHONA APPALLED WHEN MUZOREWA SIMPLY ASKED
CHONA TO HANDLE MATTER FOR HIM. CHONA OBJECTED ON GROUNDS
HE NOT RPT NOT MEMBER OF ANC. AT THIS MOMENT OF EXASPERATION,
JOSHUA NKOMO PROVED HIMSELF, IN CHONA'S WORDS, "A LEADER
CAPABLE OF GIVING POLITICAL DIRECTION" BY ARGUING THAT
SMITH'S EARLIER UNDERTAKING ON FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT WAS
WORTHLESS. NKOMO INSISTED ON REAL GUARANTEE OF IMMUNITY
FOR ALL DELEGATES WHILE CONFERRING IN RHODESIA. ANC LAWYERS
HASTILY ENLISTED TO DRAFT POINT 5 OF DECLARATION BUT BY THEN
IT WAS 2230 HOURS. SAG PM VORSTER WAS TIRED AND
WITHDREW. IN CHONA'S OPINION CHANCE THEREBY LOST
TO BRING PRESSURE TO BEAR ON SMITH TO GRANT IMMUNITY.
THIS WAS ONLY UNAGREED POINT IN 8-POINT VICTORIA FALLS
DECLARATION OF INTENT WHICH AGREED IN ALL OTHER RESPECTS
BY ANC AND SMITH. POINT 5 ON IMMUNITY MUST BE AGREED ON
BEFORE FURTHER
PROGRESS CAN BE MADE TOWARD SETTLEMENT.

8. CHONA CONSIDERS POINT 5 LEGITIMATE AND FUNDAMENTAL AND BELIEVES IT COULD HAVE BEEN PUSHED THROUGH IF IT HAD COME EARLIER IN THE PROCEEDINGS, THE ANC BEEN BETTER PREPARED, MORE UNIFIED AND MORE EFFICIENT.

9. ANC LEADERSHIP PROBLEM. AFTER SORRY SPECTACLE OF "LEADERLESS AND INCAPABLE ANC" AT VICTORIA FALLS, CHONA SAID ZAMBIANS AND OTHER NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES WORRIED ON SEVERAL COUNTS. PWER STRUGGLE BOUND TO INTENSIFY. ALREADY BISHOP MUZOREWA HAS "WANDERED OFF" TO HOLLAND TO SEEK FUNDS AND "PERHAPS JUST GET AWAY." (THE HAGUE'S 4390). OTHER MEMBERS OF ANC HAVE RETURNED TO RHODESIA AND IT IS QUESTIONABLE IF MUZOREWA HAS THE RESPECT OR SUPPORT FROM WITHIN ANC RANKS TO PRESS ON. MEANWHILE, CHONA LEFT ME WITH DISTINCT IMPRESSION, WITHOUT SAYING SO, THAT NKOMO WAS MOST IMPRESSIVE OF LOT DURING VICTORIA FALLS MEETINGS AND SITHOLE BY INDIRECT REFERENCE "A GREAT TALKER BUT NOT POWERFUL". CHONA CLEARLY DISGUSTED WITH ANC FOR IGNORING ITS OWN WEAKNESSES, OVER-ESTIMATING ITS STRENGTH AND PERSISTING WITH IN-FIGHTING. CONFIDENTIAL

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MEANWHILE, ZAMBIA WILL CONTINUE TO GIVE HOSPITALITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT TO ANC LEADERSHIP IN LUSAKA BUT IT CLEARLY IMPATIENT WITH ITS GUESTS. CHONA SPOKE OF THOUSANDS OF ZIMBABWEANS IN ZAMBIA WHOM HE HOPED COULD RETURN PEACEFULLY SOON.

10. ZAMBIAN FOLLOW-UP WITH SOUTH AFRICA. CHONA SAID ZAMBIA HAD SENT FOLLOWING 7-POINT MESSAGE TO SMITH VIA SOUTH AFRICANS:

A) REMINDED SMITH THAT HIS OPENING REMARKS AT VICTORIA FALLS SPOKE OF NO BITTERNESS, NO RECRIMINATIONS, AND FORGETTING THE PAST. ANC HAD AGREED TO THIS;

B) SMITH AND ANC ACCEPTED ALL RPT ALL POINTS OF DECLARATION OF INTENT, ONLY 5TH POINT ADDED BY ANC ON IMMUNITY NOT AGREED TO;

C) ANC NOW ACCEPTS MEETINGS INSIDE RHODESIA, INCLUDING PLENARY SESSION;

D) SMITH CALLED FOR "GIVE AND TAKE" YET HE HAS GIVEN VIRTUALLY NOTHING SO FAR;

E) ANC NOW DEMANDS IT BE LEFT INTACT AND NOT SPLIT BETWEEN ITS INTERNAL WING IN RHODESIA AND ITS EXTERNAL WING IN ZAMBIA;

F) SMITH MUST INVEST IN THE UNITY OF THE ANC IF A SETTLEMENT IS TO BE ACHIEVED;

G) SMITH MUST NOT CRITICIZE INDIVIDUALS IN THE ANC (IMPLICIT REFERENCE TO SITHOLE AND CHIKEREMA) WHICH COULD LEAD TO "VENGENACE" AND REPRISALS BY ANC AGAINST SMITH AND SUPPORTORS IN POST-SETTLEMENT PERIOD IN RHODESIA. CHONA SAID ZAMBIA GENUINELY FEARED A REAL AND POSSIBLY VIOLET STRUGGLE WHICH MIGHT FOLLOW SETTLEMENT.

11. CHONA CONCLUDED HIS RECITAL BY RESTRAINED AND VERY FRIENDLY RESTATEMENT OF HOPE AND CONFIDENCE THAT USG WOULD CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE SOUTH AFRICA IN ITS EFFORTS
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TO PERSUADE SMITH TO REACH NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WITHIN OCT 31 DEADLINE.

12. AS FOR BRITISH ROLE, CHONA SAID HE HAD ASKED FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN'S SPECIAL ADVISER DENNIS GRENNAN WHO LEFT LUSAKA FOR LONDON AUG 27 TO WORK OUT "SOME SORT OF FRAMEWORK INTO WHICH WE COULD HELP ANC FIT ALL THE PIECES TOWARD MAJORITY RULE." ALSO CONFIRMED WHAT BRITISH HICOM HAD TOLD ME EARLIER THAT ZAMBIANS ASKED BRITISH TO SUPPLY CIVIL SERVANT AS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TO HELP ANC WITH ITS HOMEWORK AND PAPERWORK. I WAS UNABLE TO PRESS CHONA FURTHER ON BRITISH ROLE BECAUSE HE WAS IN A HURRY TO LEAVE. I WILL ATTEMPT TO SEEK CLARIFICATION FROM MY BRITISH COLLEAGUE. EMBASSY LONDON MAY ALSO WISH TO FOLLOW UP QUESTION AT FCO WITH DISCREET INQUIRY.
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